An imperfect council?

There is a movement afoot to summon an "imperfect council" in order to elect a "pope." This is being promoted by a number of sedevacantist ecclesiastics. They claim to have five bishops involved, as well as a greater number of priests and religious.

The idea is to come together and elect a true pope.

While the Church needs a true pope very acutely as the only way in which to solve the problem of the Modernist infection, unfortunately a council such as is envisioned by these persons cannot produce a valid pope.

A true imperfect council is one that is composed of bishops who have jurisdiction, that is, who have received from a valid pope the power to rule over a diocese. It is called imperfect inasmuch as it is not summoned by a reigning pope. To my knowledge, there was only one of these in the Church's history, and it occurred at the time of the Great Western Schism, when there were three claimants to the throne of Peter. In order to fix the problem, jurisdictional bishops came together in council and elected Pope Martin V. The other three claimants eventually resigned.

Jurisdictional bishops are distinguished from bishops who have no diocese. These last are typically attached to a diocese as auxiliary bishops, helping the ordinary (the bishop of the diocese) with the task of performing Confirmations and of fulfilling other ceremonial demands.

These non-jurisdictional bishops do not even have the right to attend a normal general council which is summoned by a pope. The pope may invite them, but they have no right to be there, as the jurisdictional bishops have.

It is easy to see, therefore, that their function is seen by the Church to be exclusively sacramental, and that they do not participate, by right, in any way in the government of the diocese or of the Church in general.

The popes over time have made it very clear that only the College of Cardinals has the right to elect a pope. We hold that the present College of Cardinals is capable of validly choosing a successor of Peter, despite their adherence to Modernism. We hold this because it is a dogma of faith that there would be successors of Peter until the end of time. This dogma was defined by the Vatican Council of 1870. Consequently, this body of cardinals receives from Christ as Head of the Church, by a supplied jurisdiction, the powers necessary to elect a successor of Saint Peter.

This principle of supplied jurisdiction can be seen in Canon Law, which gives the power of absolving sins, in cases of extreme necessity, to priests who are defrocked and/or excommunicated. Even validly ordained schismatic or heretical priests obtain this same power from the Church. The reason is that the Catholic who is dying is in absolute and extreme need of the sacrament. The sacrament is the property of the Catholic Church. The Church may therefore empower the unworthy minister to use it.

So also, Christ, as Head of the Church may empower heretical cardinals to carry out what is absolutely necessary for the continuity of the Petrine lineage. The same holds true for the appointment of cardinals.

Let us return to the question at hand. Can a group of non-jurisdictional bishops call an imperfect council? No, because precisely they lack jurisdiction. Can they elect a pope? No, because they have no power to vote.

I am sure that the persons organizing this "council" are of good will, and desire nothing else than the good of t h e C h u r c h . T h e Church needs a true pope very badly. It cannot, however, be obtained in this way.

My fear is that such an attempt will place a stain of absurdity and ludicrousness upon all sedevacantists.

The real solution to the Church's problem is, in my opinion, fervent and persevering prayer to God to obtain a true pope. He could do this in various ways, but the most obvious way would be to convert a Leo XIV to Catholicism. God can move anyone by His grace. Witness Saint Paul, witness the Apostles who dropped their nets and followed Christ at His mere command. Witness other extraordinary conversions, such as that of Saint Augustine and of Saint Camillus of Lellis. God is all-powerful and can do whatever He wants, and He chooses His own time to do it.

Pope Pius XII said in his encyclical Mystici Corporis the following:
And if at times there appears in the Church something that indicates the weakness of our human nature, it should not be attributed to her juridical constitution, but rather to that regrettable inclination to evil found in each individual, which its ***Divine Founder permits even at times in the most exalted members of His Mystical Body, for the purpose of testing the virtue of the shepherds no less than of the flocks, and that all may increase the merit of their Christian faith****.*

The Pope is referring here to the personal sins of clergy, saying that they are permitted by Christ to test both the shepherds and the flocks "that all may increase the merit of their Christian faith." Our problem, however, is

not merely one of the personal sins of clergy, but of a would-be pope who is imposing a false religion upon the Church. How much more, then, is it true that Christ is testing the virtue of the shepherds and of the flocks? It is a general principle that God does not permit evil except for a greater good. It is my opinion that the greater good which is being accomplished by this modernist infiltration is the purging from the shepherds and the flocks all tendency to compromise with the modern world, which is nothing less than the product of Lucifer.